

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

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SUBJECT: OUTER SPACE COMMITTEE: GEOSTATIONARY ORBIT; CONCLUSION
OF GENERAL DEBATE

1. SUMMARY. COLOMBIA AND ECUADOR ACCEPTED OSC INVITATION

TO SPEAK 23 JUNE; COLOMBIA STATEMENT WAS OF EXTREME
FORMALITY AND TOOK 45 MINUTES; ECUADOR MORE BRIEFLY ECHOED.
ESSENCE OF COLOMBIAN STATEMENT WAS THAT A DEFINITION OF
OUTER SPACE IS NEEDED WHICH TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE
SOVEREIGNTY OF SUBJACENT NATIONS OVER THOSE SEGMENTS OF
THE GEOSTATIONARY ORBIT (GOS) WHICH CORRESPOND TO
NATIONAL TERRITORY. GENERAL DEBATE CONCLUDED 23 JUNE.
END SUMMARY.

2. DETAILS. COLOMBIA RECALLED THAT EQUATORIAL COUNTRIES
EXPLICITLY RESERVED THEIR RIGHTS AT THE 1977 WARC.
BECAUSE SOVEREIGNTY DOES NOT REQUIRE ACCEPTANCE BY OTHER
STATES, FOR ITS VALIDITY, EQUATORIAL STATES WILL NOT
NEGOTIATE QUESTIONS OF, OR THEIR RIGHTS TO, THE GSO.
THE USE OF THE GSO MUST BE FOR THE BENEFIT OF UNDERLYING-
COUNTRIES, WHILE OVER THE HIGH SEAS ITS USES MUST BE
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DEVOTED TO THE BENEFIT OF ALL MANKIND. THERE IS A
RIGHT OF FREE TRANSIT THROUGH THE GSO BUT PRIOR POLITICAL
AUTHORIZATION (NOT ANY TYPE OF ITU ARRANGEMENT) IS
REQUIRED FOR USE OF THE GSO ABOVE NATIONAL TERRITORY.
EQUATORIAL STATES DO NOT ACQUIESCE IN CURRENT USES OF
THE GSO AND CONTINUATION OF THE PRACTICE OF NOT REPEAT
NOT SEEKING CONSENT DOES NOT LEGITIMIZE SPACE POWER

CONDUCT.

3. COLOMBIA REFERRED TO US STATEMENTS IN THE LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE IN APRIL WHICH HAD ASSERTED THAT THE GSO IS JUST ANOTHER ORBIT AND IS RELATED TO PROPERTIES OF THE WHOLE EARTH. HE ARGUED THAT IF GSO IS SO CLOSELY RELATED TO EARTH CHARACTERISTICS, IT MUST NOT REPEAT NOT BE IN OUTER SPACE. US OBSERVATIONS ON EXTENSIVE PRACTICE OF USING THE GSO WITHOUT SEEKING CONSENT DO NOT MAKE LAW AND BIND NO ONE. COLOMBIA HAS BEEN EMPHATIC IN DENYING THAT THESE PRACTICES ARE ACCEPTABLE.

4. THE PRESENT ABSENCE OF AN AGREED DEFINITION OF OUTER SPACE ENCOURAGES THE SPACE POWERS TO DO WHATEVER THEY WISH. THE NEED FOR A DEFINITION IS URGENT. THERE ARE TWO ALTERNATIVES; (A) OUTER SPACE BEGINS WHERE THE FORCES OF THE EARTH ARE NO LONGER DOMINANT ELEMENTS, OR (B) OUTER SPACE ENCOMPASSES THE ENTIRE ENVELOPE OF THE EARTH FROM WHICH ARE TO BE EXCEPTED A REASONABLE AIR SPACE ZONE AND THE GSO ZONE. HE CONCLUDED BY NOTING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SPILLOVER QUESTION IN THE CONTEXT OF NEGOTIATING DIRECT BROADCAST SATELLITE GUIDELINES.

4. FRENCH GENERAL DEBATE STATEMENT SAME DAY CALLED DELIMITATION OF OUTER SPACE A FIRST PRIORITY ITEM BUT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GAVE NO DETAILS OF THEIR THINKING. FRENCH REP REVOL INDICATED FRENCH POSITION ON A POSSIBLE SECOND UN SPACE CONFERENCE QUITE SIMILAR TO THAT OF THE U.S. HE REITERATED FRENCH PROPOSAL TO REQUIRE CONSENT FOR THE DISSEMINATION OF ANALYZED REMOTE SENSING INFORMATION WHILE ALLOWING OPEN DISSEMINATION OF PRIMARY DATA. (FRANCE ON DBS BY SEPTEL).

5. MONGOLIA REPEATED ITS VIEW THAT STATES ARE LEGALLY ENTITLED TO EXERCISE FULL AND PERMANENT SOVEREIGNTY OVER NOT ONLY THEIR NATURAL RESOURCES BUT ALSO OVER INFORMATION CONCERNING THOSE RESOURCES. KENYA SAID IT WILL RESERVE JUDGMENT ON GSO QUESTIONS UNTIL THE CONSEQUENCES OF VARIOUS COURSES OF ACTION ARE MORE APPARENT. MEXICO ASSERTED THERE IS A BASIS FOR CONCERN BEING EXPRESSED OVER USE OF THE GSO AS A JUNKYARD. MANY USELESS OBJECTS ARE NOW IN SPACE. AN INTERNATIONAL PLAN FOR MORE EQUITABLE USE OF THE GSO IS CALLED FOR.

6. A WORLD BANK REPRESENTATIVE SPOKE INTERESTINGLY OF THE BANK'S INTEREST IN REMOTE SENSING AND DISTRIBUTED COPIES OF A LARGE LANDSAT COMPOSITE SHOWING VEGETATION IN MONSOON AND ANTI-MONSOON PERIODS IN CENTRAL, EASTERN

AND SOUTHERN INDIA. MEEHAN

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